

Claims

1. A method executed by a provider of authorizing provision of service to a user comprising:

a first step of interacting with said user to receive an ID from said user and with a database to receive an ordered list of characters associated with said ID that were selected by said provider;

a second step of interacting with said user to receive from said user information responsive to requests placed to said user in the course of said interacting; and

a third step of authorizing said provision of service when said information received in response to said requests corresponds to a subset of entries in said ordered list of characters that is associated with said requests placed to said user, provided that said service is a permitted service for a user who provides said ID.

2. The method of claim 1 where said first step is taken before said second step, and said third step succeeds said first step and said second step.

3. The method of claim 1 where said second step is taken before said first step, and said third step succeeds said first step and said second step.

4. The method of claim 1 where said characters are taken from the set {0-9,#,*}.

5. The method of claim 1 where said second step comprises the steps of:

generating a predetermined number of random variables;

for each random number created in said step of generating

(a) requesting said user to provide a responsive string of characters that is related to said random number,

(b) receiving said responsive string of characters from said user, and

(c) flagging a number in said ordered list corresponding to said random number.

6. The method of claim 5 where said requests are communicated over a telephone, and said responsive string of characters is communicated over said telephone.

7. The method of claim 1 where said service comprises telecommunication service.

8. A method of authorizing provision of service to a user comprising the steps of: receiving a ID from said user; accessing a database to retrieve N ordered lists of characters associated with said ID, where N is an integer;

generating a predetermined number of random variables;

for each random number created in said step of generating

(d) requesting said user to provide a responsive set of characters that is related to said random number,

(e) receiving said responsive set of characters from said user, and

(f) flagging a number in each of said N ordered lists corresponding to said random number; and

authorizing said provision of service when the set of responsive numbers received in response to said challenges matches a corresponding set of flagged numbers in any of said N ordered lists of numbers, provided that said service is a permitted service for a user who is associated with the ordered list that matches.

9. A calling card characterized by a table of characters.

10. The calling card of claim 9 where said table has rows, one column contains a row number, and the other column contains a character string.

11. The calling card of claim 10 where said characters are taken from the set {0-9, #, *}.

¹²
~~13~~ The calling card of claim ~~10~~⁹ where said table has rows and more than two columns, where one column contains a row number, and the other columns contains other numbers.

¹³
~~14~~ The calling card of claim ~~10~~⁹ further comprising an alpha-numeric string.

¹⁴
~~15~~ The calling card of claim ~~14~~¹³ where said alpha-numeric string is related to an ID that is related to the numbers in said table.

¹⁵
~~16~~ The calling card of claim ~~10~~⁹ further comprising a transparent collimating layer on said card, over said table.

¹⁶
~~17~~ The calling card of claim ~~10~~⁹ further comprising means for magnifying.

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~~18~~ The calling card of claim ~~10~~⁹ further comprising means for narrowing field of view.